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# high water

a floodplain management newsletter

Volume 48

October 1992

## FLOODPLAIN ENGINEER REORGANIZATION

Throughout the past year, the floodplain management section of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) in Helena has been without an engineer because of the lack of qualified personnel to fill the position. Now, the latest legislative gathering has made further budget cuts necessary. As a result, DNRC has been forced to eliminate the engineer position.

To counter this cutback, the floodplain management section recently






trained five engineers from DNRC's water resources regional offices in the various aspects of floodplain management. One drawback to this plan is that because the engineers have full-time responsibilities with their regularly assigned duties, they may not be able to review floodplain data as quickly as may be expected. The engineers are available, however, to help the floodplain management section as needed.

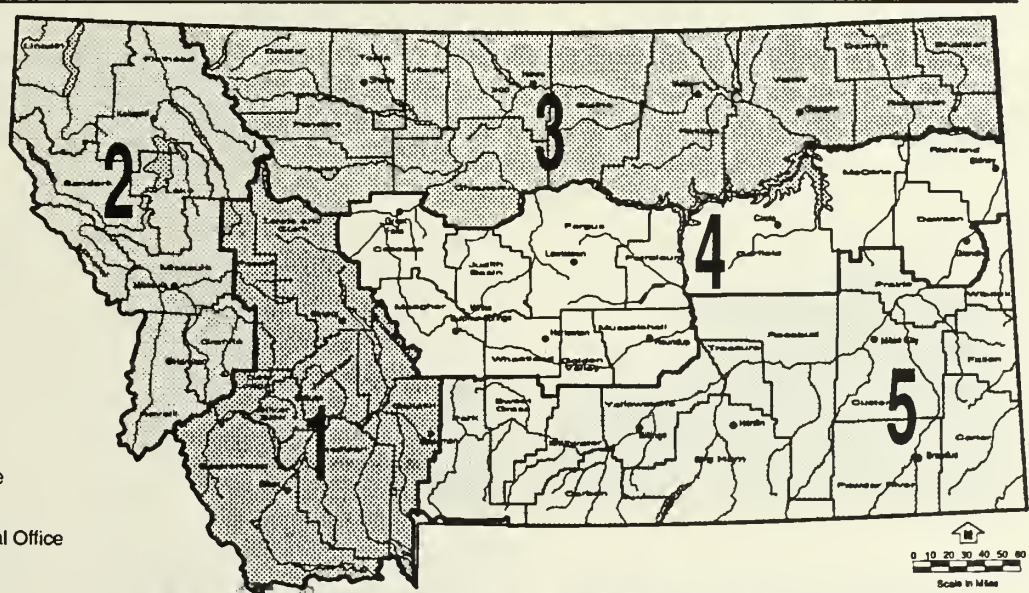
To create as little confusion or inconsistency as possible, the floodplain management section in Helena will continue to serve as the program's main contact for general and technical assistance. The Helena office will review and send all pertinent information to the appropriate engineer for that engineer's review and expertise.

Each engineer will work on projects located in a specific region of the state. The figure below outlines the regions covered by the five engineers.

### ENGINEERING BOUNDARIES

#### FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT REGIONAL ENGINEERS

-  Jim Beck • Helena Regional Office
-  Larry Schock • Missoula Regional Office
-  Marvin Cross • Havre Regional Office
-  Sterling Sundheim • Lewistown Regional Office
-  Dave Adair • Billings Regional Office



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## CRS UPDATE

Communities participating in the CRS (Community Rating System) recently received a copy of the NFIP/CRS Update from Indianapolis. The information that follows is provided for those who are not participants but who are considering applying this year. The new CRS manual dated July 1992 is available from Karl Christians at 444-6654, or from ISO in Indianapolis at (317)845-1750.

### New CRS Product

With the new manual come updated revisions to three publications that explain floodplain activities in more depth and provide sample programs: *Example Plans*, *CRS Credit for Stormwater Management*, and *CRS*

*Credit for Flood Warning*. Two new publications in this series also are available: *CRS Credit for Outreach Projects* and *CRS Credit for Drainage System Maintenance*. Communities applying for credit for these types of activities are encouraged to obtain copies of the publications before the communities complete their applications.

Also updated to complement the new Coordinator's Manual are the CRS Summary, the Quick Check, and the CRS application software. Another new software program, "Computerized Format for FEMA Elevation Certificates," is designed to help communities maintain building elevation data on IBM-compatible personal computers.

The CRS has produced a new video titled "The Community Rating Sys-

tem." The video lasts 13 minutes and provides an overview of the CRS and the roles of the various agencies and offices involved with the program. Also discussed is one community's experience with the application process and the verification visit. The video is designed to serve as an orientation for citizens and elected officials.

All software and publications mentioned in this article are available at no charge from NFIP/CRS Publications, P.O. Box 501016, Indianapolis, IN 42650-1016. The video costs \$6.00 but can be rented at no charge from Karl Christians of DNRC's floodplain management section.

If you are applying for the CRS and would like help with your application, please call Christians at 444-6654.

## CRS WORKSHOPS WELL ATTENDED

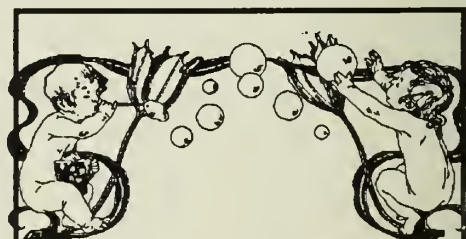
During September, DNRC's floodplain management section held Community Rating System (CRS) workshops in Havre, Kalispell, and Billings. At each workshop, participants worked through the CRS application process with the aid of Karl Christians, supervisor of the floodplain management section.

People who attended the workshops were able to learn exactly how many credit points their communities would receive (1) if they applied for activities they already were implementing, and (2) if they initiated a few other activities credited under the CRS program.

Of the communities represented at the workshops, most could easily obtain Class 9 ratings, with a few communities

able to obtain Class 8 ratings. With a Class 9 rating, a 5 percent discount in flood insurance rates will take effect October 1, 1993. For each community that receives a Class 8 or better rating, an additional 5 percent for each higher class rating will become effective the following year.

With the high cost of flood insurance and increasing requirements for homeowners to purchase flood insurance, the CRS is an effective way for property owners to save money on flood insurance. If your community has not applied to the CRS program, encourage it to do so this year. The application deadline is December 15, 1992. Please call Karl Christians at 444-6654 if you have any questions about the CRS or the application process.



## Congratulations to Karl Christians!

Proud father of son Tyler Joseph,  
born Saturday,  
November 14<sup>th</sup>

Anyone with diaper-  
changing experience is  
encouraged to send  
instructions and comments!



# EXECUTIVE ORDER 11988 FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES

On May 24, 1977, President Carter signed Executive Order 11988, which established a new policy for federal agencies to follow when dealing with floodplains. Executive Order 11988 requires federal agencies to evaluate the potential effects of the actions it may take in a floodplain to avoid adversely impacting the floodplain wherever possible. It also ensures that the planning programs and budget requests reflect consideration of flood hazards and floodplain management, including the restoration and preservation of such land areas as natural undeveloped floodplains.

## THE OBJECTIVE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11988 IS:

"To avoid to the extent possible the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and to avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative."

## THE ORDER APPLIES TO:

- All agencies that (1) acquire, manage, or dispose of federal lands and facilities; (2) undertake, finance, or assist construction and improvements; and (3) conduct activities and programs affecting land use, including planning, regulating, and licensing.
- All federal actions described in the preceding sentence.
- All floodplain locations whether they are along or near to rivers, streams, oceans, ponds, or related water bodies (all areas subject to inundation by a

flood with a one-percent chance of occurring in any given year (100-year flood or base flood).

## THE ORDER REQUIRES THAT AGENCIES:

- Avoid the base floodplain, unless it is the only practicable alternative.
- Adjust to the base floodplain (if the base floodplain cannot be avoided) to (1) reduce the hazard and the risk of flood loss; (2) minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health, and welfare; and (3) restore and preserve the natural and beneficial floodplain values.

In order to meet the provisions of Executive Order 11988, an eight-step procedure has been established that all federal projects and activities must follow.

Step #1: — The first step of the decision process is to determine if the location of the project is within the special flood-hazard area (100-year floodplain) as designated on the "flood insurance rate map" published by the Federal Insurance Administration. If the floodplain is not involved, then no further action is required to meet E.O. 11988.

Step #2: — If floodplains are involved, the agency must make public its intent to locate a proposed action in the floodplain. This notice must provide a description of the proposed action with ample lead time for meaningful input from the public.

Step #3: — The third step is to identify and evaluate the practicable alternatives to locating in the floodplain. This determination requires the

agency to consider whether the floodplain can be avoided either through alternative siting; through alternate actions that would perform the intended function but would minimize harm to or within the floodplain; or by taking no action.

Step #4: — The agency must identify if the action has impacts in the floodplain or directly or indirectly supports floodplain development that has additional impacts. If the proposed action is outside the floodplain and has no identifiable impacts or support, the action can be implemented.

Step #5: — If the proposed action has identifiable impacts or support, these effects must be minimized. Further, natural and beneficial floodplain values must be restored and preserved.

Step #6: — The proposed alternative can now be reevaluated taking into account the identified impacts, the steps necessary to minimize these impacts, and opportunities to restore and preserve floodplain values.

Step #7: If the agency head finds that the only practicable alternative is locating in the floodplain, public notice of the reasons must be given for this finding (including the alternatives considered).

Step #8: — After a reasonable period to allow for public response, the proposed action can be implemented.

Note that depending on the situation, this process may be carried out with fewer steps if all of the objectives of the decision-making process can be achieved.

Reprinted from the *Waterlog*, Idaho Dept. of Water Resources, 8/92

## MAP AMENDMENT/REVISION UPDATE

With a September 21, 1992 effective date, a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) has been issued for an area located in Montana's Flathead County. The area encompasses lots 10 through 24, Block 7, of the Riverview Subdivision Addition No. 1. The LOMR revises the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panel 1435 C, dated September 5, 1984, to remove this property from the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Because of funding constraints, a revised FIRM panel will not be published and distributed to primary map users such as local insurance agents and mortgage lenders.

The Ashley Creek re-study in Flathead County and Kalispell became final with a September 30, 1992 effective date. The FIRM and Floodway Map Index and panels 1805 C, 1815 C, and 1820 D for Flathead County, along with panel 0005 B for the city of Kalispell, have been reprinted as panels 1805 D, 1815 D, 1820 E, and 0005 C, respectively. Each new map's effective date is September 30, 1992.

Keeping the old copies of the FIRMs on file for insurance rating purposes is advised. If a flood insurance policy was originally rated from one of these maps and was continually held in force, the map in question may be used for rating the same policy even if the base flood elevation changed according to the new maps.

If you have any questions concerning a LOMR, please call Karl Christians at 444-6654 or your local floodplain administrator for assistance.

### Floodplain Management

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**Floodplain Management Section**

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